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eAuthentication Employee Registration Expands

The USDA eAuthentication Service expanded on June 30th to enable all USDA employees to obtain USDA eAuthentication Service Employee Accounts with Level 2 Access. With a single credential (userID and password), employees are able to access numerous Web-based resources across USDA and, in the future, across the Federal government. The centralization of eAuthentication across USDA provides more secure and cost effective access to Web-based applications. As of August 30th, 39,175 USDA employees received their credentials.

In order to obtain a USDA eAuthentication Service Employee Account with Level 2 Access, employees register online using a new form of identity proofing known as Remote Identity Proofing. Rather than presenting a photo ID, this method allows users to create and activate credentials using information that they know, which is then verified against information that is known by an authoritative source. To register, USDA employees enter specific information into the USDA eAuthentication Web site, and the information is validated against personnel and payroll information from the National Finance Center (NFC). The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) endorses Remote Identity Proofing.

Employees have been or will be contacted by agency representatives, eAuthentication Agency Registration Leads (ARLs), with instructions on how to register for a USDA eAuthentication Service Employee Account with Level 2 Access. Employees are provided with the link to the USDA eAuthentication Employee Credentialing Web site and are given instructions about what information is needed and where it should be entered online.

By providing this information online to the USDA eAuthentication Service Web site, employees can be identity proofed automatically. Employees unable to provide all of the correct information or who mistakenly enter incorrect information are aided in the registration process by Agency Registration Authorities (ARAs). ARA's are USDA personnel

who manually process any credential applications when the online attempt fails. Within five days of a failed registration attempt, ARAs will try to contact the employee by email and/or by phone to validate information needed during the employee credentialing process. If the ARAs cannot locate valid contact information for the employee, the response time may be longer. All employees are expected to obtain their credentials before October 1st, 2004.

For more information on the eAuthentication Employee Registration, please contact the eGovernment Team.

AgLearn Increases USDA Users

The Agriculture Learning Service (AgLearn) increased the availability of the service to include all employees from the Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Risk Management Agency, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the Farm Service Agency during a successful second launch on June 30th. On July 30th, the availability was further extended to all employees from both the Natural Resources Conservation Services and Rural Development agencies. During this second launch, AgLearn integrated with the USDA eAuthentication Service to provide greater security for the system and to simplify the sign-in process, so that now users only need a single sign-on to use both services. During September 2004, AgLearn is providing the service to remaining USDA agencies and employees.

AgLearn also recently made new courses electronically available, including several that fulfill the training requirements for many USDA employees. AgLearn currently offers courses such as Incident Command System Training I-100 and I-200, Integrated Acquisition System Requisition Management Training, and Cyber Security's Security Literacy Basics.

USDA offers free Web-based security literacy and basics training for all of USDA employees and contractors at <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov/>. The course, "Security Literacy Basics," was developed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer's Cyber Security Office, and provides a general overview of information security and best practices. Security Literacy Basics also satisfies Federal and USDA requirements in establishing annual security awareness training for all employees.

For more information on the second launch of AgLearn, please contact the eGovernment Team.

USDA.gov Enhancing Services, Soon to Launch "My USDA"

In the autumn of 2004, the USDA.gov Enterprise Shared Services Team is enhancing services offered to agencies, employees, agricultural producers and other customers. Several improved and/or new capabilities will be provided. These capabilities include, but are not limited to, the release of "My USDA" and the migration of agency Web sites to meet USDA Web Style Guide standards.

In September 2004, USDA is launching a new feature, My USDA that will allow individual users to customize the USDA Web site to meet their unique needs. Users of the new My USDA Web site will be able to specify specific tools and content that will be displayed on their home page. My USDA is a part of USDA's effort to better respond to the needs of American agriculture and consumers. According to Secretary Ann M. Veneman, the improved capabilities will help make the Department's Web site more powerful and improve public access to USDA information and services.

The feature will be available at www.my.usda.gov.

My USDA will supplement the new look of the recently re-designed USDA Web site. Over the past several months, all agency and staff office Webmasters participated in meetings held to discuss application of the USDA Web Style Guide to all USDA Web sites and Web-based applications. The Web Style Guide provides standards for the look and feel of USDA Web sites. In line with recommendations from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), most agencies are expected to migrate their Web sites to comply with the new standards within the next eighteen months. Currently, many agencies are in different phases of migration and Web page design.

New tools are being made available for agencies to use in training their developers and to create reusable resources and templates. Many of the new tools are expected to be available in the fall. The Enterprise Shared Services Team also plans to release the Web content management service that will help non-technical users contribute content to the Web using form-based templates in late 2004.

For more information on USDA.gov Enterprise Shared Services, please contact the eGovernment team.

Science.gov Advances Through Unique Collaboration

In May 2004, Science.gov launched its newest iteration, introducing real-time relevancy ranking to government science retrieval. The launch enables citizens to sort through the government's 47 million pages of research and return results most likely to meet individual needs. The agencies responsible for Science.gov have taken a somewhat unique approach to collaboration to make the initiative successful.

Eleanor Frierson, Deputy Director of USDA's National Agricultural Library (NAL) and also the co-chair of the Science.gov alliance, believes that Science.gov is successful because all of the participating agencies are responsible for bringing something to the table. Science.gov is the presentation of all of the agencies' contributions.

Science.gov allows users to search across scientific databases of seventeen government organizations and twelve agencies. Each agency provides data, arranges their data as a service, and makes their data available for citizens to use through the interface of and search engine provided on Science.gov.

Science.gov is a gateway where users can access data by topic rather than agency. Formerly, users would have to go to individual agency Web sites to find all research on a given topic. Each agency still prepares its own data for the site and is responsible for keeping their databases up-to-date, but now citizens can access the data for multiple agencies in one location.

USDA's National Agricultural Library was one of twelve Federal agencies that is part of the CENDI (originally standing for Commerce, Energy, NASA, Defense Information Managers Group) alliance which worked together to make Science.gov possible. CENDI members provide administrative support and coordination for the Web site and its applications. The twelve agencies of CENDI represent ninety-six percent of the FY04 Federal research and development budget. Those agencies include: USDA NAL, Dept. of Commerce National Technical Information Service, Dept. of Defense's Defense Technical Information Center, Dept. of Education National Library of Education, Dept. of Health and Human Resources National Library of Medicine, Department of Interior USGS/Biological Resources Discipline, Environmental Protection Agency Office of Research and Development and Office of Environmental Information, NASA Scientific and Technical Information Program, National Archives and Records Administration, and the U.S. Government Printing Office. Science.gov is an example of the successes that can be achieved through successful interagency collaboration.

For more information on science.gov, please visit <http://www.science.gov/>.

For more information on any of these topics, or for general comments or questions, contact the eGovernment Team at:

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